



runoff from home lawns and gardens flows into storm sewers or into roadside ditches which lead to Clark County's surface and groundwater. Runoff results from rainstorms and from lawn and garden watering

practices. Pollutant sources include: fertilizer, pesticides, soil eroding from bare areas, pet wastes, and oil or grease that may have leaked or spilled on to the ground, driveway or street.



Along with carrying pollutants, runoff from yards, roofs, and paved areas increases erosion in streams, washes away wildlife habitat or smothers streambeds with mud.

The ways in which home landscapes are designed and maintained directly affects runoff and our water quality. Landscapes can be designed to retain water on-site, encourage infiltration, and even to "treat" some pollutants through small ponds and wetlands. Trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and other plantings can be selected with water quality protection in mind.

- Reduce the amount of paved surfaces to increase the natural infiltration of stormwater into the ground and reduce the potential for pollutants to run off-site into storm drains or ditches.

When installing a new driveway or sidewalk, consider a gravel bed, bricks and flagstones, bricks or interlocking pavers, crushed shells or stone and bark chips. These porous surfaces encourage some

- Plant pest resistant, native plants and shrubs. This reduces maintenance for you and the need for additional fertilizers and pesticides, in addition to reducing the amount of watering needed during the summer months. Remove exotic and invasive plants which can destroy the natural diversity of an existing habitat.
- Retain or create vegetative buffer zones adjacent to creeks and drainageways.
- Landscape for wildlife. Healthy wildlife and clean water are interrelated. Many practices which help protect water quality also enhance wildlife habitat. Habitats which encourage birds, bees, butterflies, and microorganisms help to sustain natural systems with natural pollutant reduction and soil conservation functions. Landscapes which benefit wildlife also help improve watershed water retention.

To encourage wildlife, provide the following:

Food - every species of wildlife has its own requirements

Water - ponds or puddles will work

Shelter - or cover

Space - every species has its own territorial needs

Vegetative edges - which encourage diversity

For more information on natural gardening, call Clark County Environmental Services at 397-6118, ex. 4352 or WSU Master Gardeners at 254-8436.